

MISSISSIPPI LEGISLATURE

THIRTY-FIRST DAY.

The house passed the bill providing for a new codification of the laws of the State, and after considerable wrangling authorized the speaker to appoint a special committee to go to the gulf coast and investigate the oyster bill, which promises to provoke a spirited factional fight.

The senate spent the entire morning considering the bill appropriating \$1,250,000 for the common schools of the State. A strong disposition was shown among many members to cut down the allowance.

H. B. 7.—To appropriate money for the support of the common school fund, set as the special order for 10 o'clock, was called up.

The bill appropriates \$1,250,000 for that purpose, together with the poll tax.

Senator Farley moved to amend by substituting \$1,000,000. He claimed that the larger amount was not necessary because of the balances now on hand from former appropriations, and remaining in the county treasuries to the credit of the school fund. In some of the counties he said these balances were sufficient to run the schools without any appropriations as long as they have heretofore.

Senator Boyd opposed the amendment. He was not willing to begin economizing at the expense of that class in whose hands the future of this State would be placed.

Senator Parks was opposed to the amendment. He didn't believe it was economy to economize at the expense of the educational interests of the State. The common schools needed to be improved. They were the reliance of the country boys and girls for their education, and the terms should be lengthened so as to give them better advantages in that line.

Senator Greaves was in favor of the amendment. He said the amendment already passed by this body allowing the poll tax to be retained in the counties added \$300,000 to the school fund already, and the bill as it now stood would really be to appropriate \$1,550,000 instead of \$1,250,000. This amendment would not reduce the amount below that appropriated last year, but would really increase it \$50,000.

Senator Hightower thought the title of the bill should be changed so as to read, "a bill to create the necessity for issuing bonds and to educate the negro." He said the children would derive no benefit from the passage of this bill. It would go to pay increased salaries to teachers and other increasing expenses. Every dollar spent by the State went half to the negro, and they would get the benefit of this increased appropriation.

Senator Henry said some of the senators were scared of a bond issue when the necessity did not exist. But if it was necessary to issue bonds to educate the barefoot boy and calico girl, then he said, issue.

Senator Franklin (31st) was in favor of the bill. He was not afraid to go on record as voting for it, neither did he believe it would call for a bond issue.

The amendment cutting down the school fund appropriation was voted down and the original bill appropriating \$1,250,000 per annum, passed by a vote of 28 to 7.

The finance committee made an unfavorable report on the bill appropriating \$190,000 to erect monuments at the National Park at Vicksburg.

The bill prohibiting the shipment of liquors from "wet" counties to "dry" counties was unfavorably reported.

In the house, owing to the absence of the author, Mr. Robbins, H. B. 48, which was the special order of the day, was laid aside and made the special order of next Tuesday. This bill provides for the exemption of money loaned and vendors liens for purchase money of real estate, where the interest does not exceed 6 per cent.

Mr. Millsaps called up H. B. 54, providing for a new codification of the laws of the State. The committee amendments, four in number, were adopted.

The bill was then read a third time and passed.

This bill authorizes the "governor to appoint three code commissioners learned in the law."

Mr. Greaves offered, by request, a resolution directing the speaker to appoint a committee of seven members to go to the gulf coast and make an investigation of the oyster industry.

Mr. Barber, of Harrison, stated that in view of pending legislation on the subject of the oyster industry it is important that the house should have full information.

The resolution was then adopted by a vote of 38 to 15.

A minority report from the committee on universities and colleges regarding H. B. 377, abolishing Greek letter fraternities at the universities, was submitted, recommending that the fraternities in this and other institutions, supported by the State, should be abolished.

THIRTY-SECOND DAY.

The announcement of Senator Walker's death was made in the house immediately after the roll call, and, on motion of Mr. Cowley, it was decided that adjournment at the dinner hour should be until Friday morning as a tribute of respect to the deceased.

A large number of committee reports were submitted, and a majority of the measures returned were with unfavorable recommendations.

The bill authorizing the Mississippi levee board to make \$1,000,000 bond issue was passed, with an amendment

from the committee on levees, eliminating the senate amendment providing that the bonds shall not be sold below par. The bill was sent immediately back to the senate for concurrence at the next meeting of that body.

The judiciary committee slaughtered nearly a score of bills which have been under consideration. An effort is now on foot in the house to prevent introduction of bills after March 1, and to provide that bills with unfavorable recommendations shall not be considered until all measures bearing favorable reports are disposed of.

The house took up the privilege tax bill and adopted fifteen sections of the measure. The feature of the morning was the adoption of the section assessing a tax of \$500 per annum on bucket-shops, which went through after a spirited debate, many members holding that the imposing of this license is practically a license to gambling. The idea of the majority, however, was that the bill would force the bucket-shops out of existence.

Despite the fact that the measure was debated all day, the senate failed to cut down the common school fund appropriation bill giving \$1,250,000 per annum for this purpose, which, with the poll taxes retained in the counties, will make the allowance for the schools over \$1,600,000 per year.

Only seven members voted in opposition to the measure—Messrs. Dent, Duan, Elmore, Farley, Gordon, Mounger and Sanders. Several others were in favor of an appropriation of only \$1,000,000, but when this amendment was voted down, they toed the scratch and registered their votes in favor of the measure.

The bill now goes to the governor, and it is known that he will give it his signature. This is the largest appropriation Mississippi has ever made for her common schools.

The house convened at 10 o'clock. Owing to the absence of Speaker Thomas, Mr. Smith of Holmes was elected speaker pro tem. by acclamation.

Mr. Cowley offered resolutions, which were adopted, on the death of Hon. W. B. Walker, a senator from Monroe county.

A minority report was submitted on H. B. 49, relating to the exercise of the right of eminent domain from members of the judiciary committee. The report opposes the granting of eminent domain rights to street railways.

S. B. 205—Authorizing the Mississippi levee board to issue one million dollars in bonds was called up by Mr. Miller of Sharkey.

The bill was read a third time and passed by a vote of all present. By unanimous consent the bill was returned immediately to the senate for concurrence in amendment.

Mr. Stennis, chairman of the ways and means committee, called up the new privilege tax bill and explained that this is the first entire measure of the kind that has been offered since 1896.

The bill was taken up for adoption section by section.

THIRTY-THIRD DAY.

Owing to the absence of many members who are attending the funeral of Senator Walker very little business of importance was transacted in the senate today.

The McLaurin District Court bill, which seeks to divide the State into forty-five District Court districts, each presided over by a judge who shall draw a salary of \$75 per month, which was the special order for the day, was continued until next Monday at 3 o'clock. This bill has attracted considerable attention on account of the large amount of patronage it creates, the district judges to be appointed by the governor and holding until the regular election in November. It provides that District Courts shall have concurrent jurisdiction with justice's courts, power to try damage suits and civil actions where not over \$500 is involved, and concurrent jurisdiction with Chancery Courts in divorce cases.

The house spent a greater portion of its session considering the privilege tax bill. The house spent the entire afternoon discussing the bill.

The governor signed the house bills changing office hours of State officials, creating the new county of Lamar and several local and private measures.

A substitute offered by Senator McLaurin of the Twentieth for S. B. 241, to amend the act to incorporate the levee board of the counties of Bolivar, Washington and Issaquena. Same was done, and bill as substituted passed.

Senator Bloomfield asked unanimous consent to call up S. B. 153, to authorize the M., J. & K. C. railroad to remove the draw bridge from Pascagoula river in Green county and replace same by fixed span bridge, and same was granted. The bill was read a third time and passed.

Senator Moore of the Twenty-eighth introduced a resolution indorsing the bill introduced in congress by Congressman Brownlow of Tennessee looking toward the national government co-operating with the State government in building roads and same was read and adopted.

Senator Greaves called up S. B. 256, to authorize the board of mayor and aldermen of Canton to sell the old school house property. The bill was read a third time and passed.

Bills were passed as follows: Paying L. Brame \$250 for services as counsel in Phil A. Rush trial.

To authorize immediate payment of wages of deceased employees when not exceeding \$250 per month; to enable

guardians to mortgage property of minors; providing compensation for retiring lieutenant-governor; exempting directors of manufacturing companies from liabilities in excess of capital stock; appropriating \$2,500 for repairs in governor's mansion; to provide separate assessment rolls for Bolivar county.

In the house Mr. Foster of Warren offered a resolution directing the attorney-general to institute proceedings to set aside the merger of the Mobile & Ohio and Southern Railways, declaring same to be violative of the constitutional provision against the consolidation of parallel and competing lines. The resolution is quite lengthy, giving in detail the history of the merger and citing the law bearing on the subject. The resolution further declares that laws should be enacted forever forbidding the sale or transfer of railroads to other lines in the State. Referred to committee on corporations.

The motion of Mr. East, that the special order be displaced and the house resolve itself into a committee of the whole to consider the discussion of the privilege tax bill, brought on quite a discussion as to the preference of the revenue bill over the stock law bill, each side having earnest advocates, but the motion of Mr. East prevailed.

At 10:55 the house went into committee of the whole, with Mr. Smith as the chairman of the committee.

Sections 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27 and 28 were adopted as reported. Sections 29 and 30 were adopted with very slight variation from the committee's report.

Killing Many Bills.

The working committees of the two houses of the legislature are now slashing right and left on pending bills, and the calendars are being deluged each day with measures unfavorably reported. The liquor traffic committee of the senate gave the black eye to several bills seeking to restrict the liquor traffic, conspicuous among the number being the McGee bill prohibiting the shipment of liquor from "wet" counties into the "dry" counties, and forbidding railroad and express companies from handling this class of traffic.

Over 800 bills have been introduced since the legislature convened, and fully 60 per cent of the number has already been slaughtered.

Against Railroad Merger.

The Foster resolution introduced in the lower house directing the attorney-general to institute proceedings to set aside the merger or consolidation of the Southern Railway and the Mobile & Ohio, and which was referred to the committee on corporations, is creating much lively comment among the members of the legislature.

During the early part of the session a bill was introduced to validate this merger, but it has been lost sight of, and the Foster resolution comes in the form of a sharp rejoinder declaring this merger to be violative of the constitutional provision against the consolidation of parallel and competing lines of railway.

It will be remembered that when this merger was accomplished about two years ago there was much talk of legal proceedings against it. The matter was carefully considered by Attorney-General McClurg, and several conferences with the attorneys of the two corporations were held, the result of which was the filing of a domestic charter by both roads in this State, which were approved by the governor, and assurances given that no proceedings would be instituted against the merger.

Against Fraternities.

The unfavorable report made by the house committee on universities and colleges on the bill pending for the abolition of the Greek-letter fraternities and societies at the University of Mississippi and all other State educational institutions, provoked a minority report on the measure this morning, signed by Messrs. Ellis and Mitchell, in which the fraternities were handled without gloves.

The minority report denounced in unmeasured terms these fraternities as an outrage on decency, a glaring evil, expensive and ruinous to the student body, promoting cleanliness and causing social ostracism, causing students to neglect their studies, and leading them to indulge in midnight revels and Bacchanalian debaucheries of the most outrageous kind, many members being expelled by the faculty on account of drunkenness and other vices. The report criticized, with especial severity the "All Right Club," and accuses many members of insubordination and frequent shielding of fraternity men guilty of evil deeds. At some length it deals with how the university has been handicapped since these organizations came into existence. The conclusion is quite flowery.

Gratitude.

The snake was trying to shed his skin.

"Help me off with this, will you?" he said to a frog that happened to be passing.

The frog kindly complied with the request, and presently the discarded skin lay stretched along the ground.

"Now," observed the frog, "I suppose you will do with that as I do with my cast-off garments—eat it."

"No," said the snake. "There is something better in sight."

Thereupon he ate the frog.

The moral of this, my dear, is that there is more than one kind of skin game, and some kinds are meaner than others.—Chicago Tribune.

Mississippi State News

Agricultural and Manual Training in Public Schools.

Prof. J. C. Hardy, president of the Mississippi Agricultural and Mechanical College, in discussing this subject in his annual report to the legislature, said:

I agree with the State superintendent of education and with the State Teachers' Association in the opinion that the elements of agricultural and manual training should be taught in the public schools of the State, and that a department of industrial pedagogy should be established here for the purpose of training teachers for this work. The State Teachers' Association, at its meeting in Vicksburg last May, passed the following recommendation, which, in my opinion, presents exactly the organization that Mississippi needs for putting in operation the strongest school system of any State in the South: "The Association begs to present to the legislature that consideration and need for the State Normal School as a separate and distinct educational center, and prays that honorable body, in the effort to make more efficient the means of education in the State, will establish such an institution for the training of teachers for the country schools; that the Department of Pedagogy at the Industrial Institute and College should be retained as a guarantee that our schools shall have teachers of broad scholarship and professional training; that a Department of Industrial Pedagogy should be established at the Agricultural and Mechanical College, where teachers may be prepared to give instruction in the elements of agriculture and manual training, and be brought thoroughly in sympathy with every phase of industrial education."

Hon. L. D. Harvey, State superintendent of public instruction in Wisconsin, says that from his study of the rural schools in this country, as compared with those in Europe, he became convinced that as regards instruction in the principles of agriculture in grades of schools below the agricultural colleges, we are far behind foreign countries, both in the scope of the work attempted and in the extent to which it has been organized. He does not think it feasible at present to introduce the teaching of agriculture into our public schools, owing largely to the lack of trained teachers. "Whenever we have in our rural schools," he says, "a body of professional trained teachers, who have had specific instruction in this subject, and modes of teaching it, we may then hope to make some progress in the rural schools, but until then, we must look elsewhere for this instruction." Dr. A. C. True, director of the Office of Experiment Stations, and one of the most profound thinkers of this country, emphasizes the same point, when he says: "At present, the problem of obtaining properly qualified teachers is a serious one. Most of the teachers now employed in the elementary schools and in the public high schools, have been trained in literary and scientific institutions, or in technical schools, where no agriculture has been taught. It is only now and then that a teacher is found who is in real sympathy with agricultural education. Attention must, therefore, be directed to the fitting of

teachers for this work in the agricultural colleges." Dr. True says further: "The discoveries of the agricultural experiment stations, and the broader technical training of the leaders of agricultural progress in the colleges, are producing profound effect on our agricultural practice, and when every other industry is allying itself closely with the schools and seeking changes in the school courses which will be to its benefit, it will not do for agriculture to hold aloof from the educational movements of our times and attempt to run a twentieth century agricultural system on the basis of an eighteenth or even a nineteenth century school system. The fact remains that if we are to improve our agriculture and compete on the best terms with our rivals in the world's markets, if we are to make the conditions of country life attractive enough to keep the bright boys and girls on the farms, if we are to equalize the advantages of country and town, so as to maintain an intelligent, prosperous, progressive and contented yeomanry, we must give immediate and effective attention to the needs of the rural schools. The farmers have this matter in their own hands; they can have a better state of things if they will, and now that the educational leaders are moving actively for the improvement of the rural schools, nothing but the indifference or the opposition of the people most concerned can defeat their laudable efforts."

While the agricultural college, the experiment station, the farmers' institutes are powerful factors in the uplifting of the agricultural masses, yet, if we are to reach the people, and the whole people, with this gospel of a better agriculture, we must use the public schools. We cannot use the public schools efficiently without properly trained teachers in sympathy with agricultural and industrial education. These teachers cannot be supplied without being brought in touch with the great institution, such as the State has in the Agricultural and Mechanical College. In accordance with the resolution of the State Teachers' Association, passed last May at Vicksburg; in accordance with the suggestion of our efficient State superintendent of education; and believing this step to be the most far-reaching in the development of the State's educational system, I recommend the establishment in this institution of a Department of Industrial Education, where teachers may be trained in the elements of agriculture and manual training, and inoculated with the spirit of industrial education. With this department and the teachers thus trained, the State superintendent will have an efficient force with which to put into operation his idea of consolidated country schools with the elements of agriculture and of the agricultural rural high schools with agriculture and manual training. This will give us an articulated system consisting of the consolidated country schools, the rural agricultural high schools and the agricultural college, just as we now have an articulated system with the city primary schools, the city high schools and the State University. With these two articulated systems in active operation, with the extended term by local taxation that is now being pushed by Superintendent Whitfield, the Mississippi public schools will soon equal any in the country.

Penitentiary Has No Cash.

The Mississippi penitentiary is dead broke.

Owing to the fact that the legislature has not yet passed the pending appropriation bill, the prison officials find themselves without any cash to carry on the usual routine work. The warden's expense account has been depleted, the contingent fund is exhausted, and even the traveling sergeant finds himself without the cash wherewith to carry prisoners from the various county jails to the convict farms. As a result many prisoners who have recently been given sentences are in the county jails awaiting transportation, and thus delaying the commencement of their sentences.

The secretary of the board states that he is without funds with which to give the discharged convicts \$10 each next month, and about \$300 will be required for this purpose, as the number discharged will be unusually large. A short time ago the board of control borrowed \$500 from one of the Jackson banks and this has been expended to defray the ordinary running expenses.

It is expected, however, that the legislature will have the usual appropriation of \$200,000 per year available for the penitentiary before the end of the month.

May Postpone Them.

On account of measles, mumps and smallpox being in the county, it is said that a petition will be presented to Hon. E. O. Sykes, circuit judge of the district, to postpone the March term of the Circuit Court of Itawamba county.

Pearls in Mussels.

The negroes in the vicinity of Aberdeen believe that they have struck a bonanza on account of the establishment of the pearl button factory at that place. The factory will make buttons from mussel shells, and one old negress, with the help of her son, gathered 1,000 pounds of mussel shells in a day and sold them to the factory, realizing the magnificent sum of \$3.50 therefor. While cleaning the shells she found pearls on the inside, which were sold for \$75, thus making a total of \$78.50 for the day's work.

Consumption is Contagious.

In his report to the legislature, which has just been laid on the desks of the members, Dr. T. J. Mitchell, superintendent of the Mississippi Insane Hospital, ventures the opinion that tuberculosis is a contagious disease and urges that special provisions be made at the institution in order that patients of this class may be completely eliminated from the other wards. Dr. Mitchell makes some statements regarding the alarming spread of tuberculosis among negroes.

Whitecaps in Jefferson.

Reports come from Jefferson county that several outrages favoring of white capism have recently been committed in that county, and the lawabiding citizens have taken the matter in hand with the purpose of promptly nipping the outlawry in the bud before it results in the demoralized labor conditions prevailing in other counties of the State.